SEMAPHORE SIGNAL

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The publication for Lisa™ and Macintosh™ users and developers.

#16

17 September 1984

Priam's DataTower Arrives For Tests

Not long after our *Signal #13* story about Priam Whamos was published, we got a call from Bill North at Priam, who asked if we would like to find out more about their 86MB disk for the Lisa. The unit is called a DataTower, features a built-in 1/4" tape drive for backup, and is being retailed to the Lisa market as the MassFile by Tecmar. Negotiations began, and phone calls and letters started to wander back and forth between Priam and Semaphore.

Last week, three boxes totaling 110 pounds arrived from San Jose. It was the DataTower. We hate to open a delivery until we're ready to write about it (or at least take good notes), otherwise we might forget some of those interesting first impressions. And while this copy of *Signal* was still going through rework at the time (and could easily handle a few last minute changes), we couldn't possibly finish a comprehensive review of the DataTower and include it in the issue. So there was obviously no reason to open the shipment just yet. On the other hand, not

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opening a newly arrived product is like putting off opening Christmas packages even though it's December 25th. It didn't take long before we reached a compromise: we'd open the shipment, spend just half a day or so checking it out, report on just that much, and then do the rest of the investigation (or at least enough to look like we're making progress) when the next issue rolls around.

We opened the first of the two small boxes and found a blank 1/4" tape cartridge, a power cord, a head cleaning kit, and a photocopy of a 180 page preliminary product specification (slightly too thick for its single staple). The second small box held another blank cartridge, an interface card designed to plug into a Lisa, and a cable to connect the card to the DataTower. The third box held the DataTower itself, contained in a 7" wide, 26" tall and 20" deep metal cabinet that's just right for standing alongside a desk. Unpacking dropped the unit's weight down to about 80 pounds.

It only took us about ten minutes to install everything. The product specification that was included is really engineering documentation designed for programmer types who need to worry about interfacing and writing drivers and all of those esoteric subjects. It doesn't really try to be end user documentation describing how to simply make the unit operate with a Lisa. So we just got out our old Apple documentation on installing a Lisa two-port card, followed all the pictures and went through all the installation steps (but with the Priam card), attached the cable, and powered everything on.

The Lisa we used was an original model that was upgraded to a 2/5, but which still has old ROMs so that the Startup Menu shows two twiggy slots. With the Priam's interface card installed, we were expecting to now find another printed circuit board icon in the Startup Menu. Instead, the menu included an actual little DataTower icon! Those ROMs aren't so old, after all...

We quickly installed a 3.0 Office System on

the new disk, and we were off and running. Now Attributes shows 142,420 blocks for our disk device.

One way to think of the DataTower is as something like another Profile, except that it's a lot bigger and faster. Unfortunately, it's noisier too, just enough noisier to be a bit too loud for a nice, calm office environment. Naturally, it's also more expensive. At $8,995 suggested retail, the cost per megabyte is a lot less than on a Profile (and you get the built-in tape drive, too).

Backing up the DataTower is a lot simpler than backing up a Profile, at least in the sense of not requiring a couple of boxes of floppies and lots of operator attention. By duplicating the disk icon, you can start copying the disk to the cartridge tape. So far, we've tried this once and soon realized that 3.0 copies the entire disk image to tape, regardless of how many files are actually stored on the disk, so we canceled the operation once it asked us to insert tape cartridge number two. We'll try a complete save again when we have a bit more time, and let you know how it goes.

We've also started work on an interesting little project that will try to fully exercise the DataTower in a special way. Stay tuned for more details.

This Month's Mailbag

T/Maker Reviews Our Review

We guess you didn't exactly love our ClickArt Personal Graphics for the Macintosh. *[See Signal #15.]* Though you question the quality of our images, in all honesty we have yet to see better images in any other collection. (We're still astounded when we look at Einstein or David and realize they were hand-drawn with the mouse.) As we have four different artists represented, the styles do vary (which is why Mondale looked so different from the rest).

Actually, we agree with a few of the points

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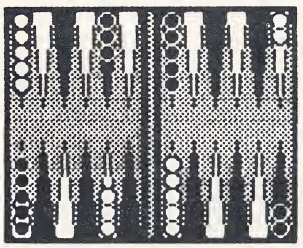

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made in the review. The documentation should have contained a printout of all the images. The images are not all that useful or organized for standard business applications.

But, in all honesty, we didn't want utility to be ClickArt's primary attribute. We wanted it to be fun. We figured people would enjoy a collection of interesting topical images to play with on their Macs. We believe this is the way most of our buyers have perceived ClickArt. We seem to have very few unhappy customers, and about 8,000 satisfied ones.

In any event, our second ClickArt product is out, and we have bravely enclosed it in the hopes that it will be better received than the first. Called ClickArt:Publications, this one contains practical images, headlines, alphabets and layout guides to aid people in creating newsletters, flyers and announcements. You can see all the images it contains on the enclosed instruction sheet. A comprehensive *Tips Manual* is not only included in this product, it is also being sent free to all previous ClickArt owners who returned their registration card.

We hope you like this one better than the last. We look forward with trepidation to your review.

Robert Simon and Heidi Roizen,
T/Maker Company, Mountain View, CA

Einstein and David were great. That artist should have done the whole disk. We'll definitely give your new product a complete review in a future issue. For now you can probably relax, because our sneak peek at the instruction sheet you sent indicates that ClickArt:Publications indeed looks like a much better collection. -MG

A Reader Abandons 3.0

Recently, I received a 2/10 upgrade for my Lisa with the new 7/7 operating system included. After using the new Office System for several hours, I must say that I do not at all share the positive tone reported in your *Signal #14* article, and I would definitely not recommend that Lisa owners rush out to purchase this new package without first giving it very careful consideration.

A bug has been introduced in LisaDraw 3.0 that makes it impossible to print gray lines as in previous versions. In eliminating the line shade selection and replacing it with a pen pattern, it is now necessary to select a gray fill pen pattern (second up from black) to produce the dotted line effect of gray lines. Although this appears identical on the video screen to previous LisaDraw gray lines, it is now printed as a fuzzy black line. Over the last eight months, I have produced hundreds of drawings, many using gray lines to denote hidden lines, projections, or for various half-tone effects. Under 3.0, none of these drawings can be printed correctly.

In discussing the problem with two Apple officials over the toll-free Lisa support line (which is often not answered), they conceded that this is a bug, that there is no way to get around it, and that a corrected version of the software may not be available for as long as one year.

Beyond this LisaDraw bug, I did some benchmarking to compare the 2.0 Office System and LisaDraw against 7/7 and 3.0 LisaDraw. The results are summarized in the following table:

	2.0	3.0	Change
Cold power-up	2'23"	2'41"	+13%
Desktop to Environments	14.0"	14.4"	+3%
Restart from Environments	1'14"	1'35"	+28%
Open Clock	10.6"	7.6"	-28%
Open Preferences	14.4"	31.0"	+115%
Open a LisaDraw file, 1st time	58.9"	1'08"	+15%
Open the file, 2nd time	32.6"	39.3"	+21%
Close the LisaDraw file	17.2"	15.3"	-11%
Duplicate the LisaDraw file	19.7"	21.0"	+7%
LisaDraw full-screen redisplay	6.6"	11.4"	+73%
Select all and move slightly	39.9"	98.0"	+146%

The LisaDrawing I used would be considered of moderate size, and contains over 100 objects. Results are in seconds, or minutes and seconds, as indicated. Positive percentages in the Change column indicate the *increased execution time* for 3.0 software. I have also found that printing with 3.0 can be up to 50% slower.

While several very advantageous new features have been added to the 7/7 desktop and the 3.0 tools, the LisaDraw bug described, and the incredible delays in execution, make 7/7 completely unacceptable to me. I would have been particularly irked had I paid $150 for just the software upgrade, submitted my old 2.0 diskettes, and irreversibly converted all of my old drawings to the 3.0 tool format. As it is, I have abandoned 7/7 and its new tools, and am back to 2.0 for the forseeable future.

Christopher E. Strangio, Arlington, MA

Ken Silverman has told us that 3.0 also does not always print overlapping object correctly on a daisy wheel printer. We have thought of a possible (although awkward) way around your bug, but it's only really useful when creating new 3.0 shapes. To get a gray border, draw your required shape with the usual fill pattern and a pen pattern of None. Then create a slightly larger duplicate shape with a gray fill pattern, again using a pen pattern of None. Send the gray shape to the background, center it behind the filled shape, and if the gray object is just the right size, you'll get the effect of a gray border around the foreground object. The non-existent pen capability of 3.0 is what avoids the white border lines that appear when 2.0 tries this technique. Another possible crutch is to use some other pen pattern similar to gray. As for the speed of 3.0, we really never noticed a difference, but your table of timings immediately prompted us to make some tests of our own. Here are the results:

	2.0	3.0	Change
Cold power-up	1'47"	1'49"	+2%
Desktop to Environments	12.8"	8.7"	-32%
Restart from Environments	1'56"	1'58"	+2%
Open Clock	8.6"	7.8"	-9%
Open Preferences	11.7"	12.3"	+5%
Tear off LisaDraw stationery	11.9"	2.2"	-82%
Open blank LisaDraw stationery	33.6"	27.1"	-19%
Immediately save and put away	8.2"	5.8"	-29%

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tests. In our case, we used a 2/5 running 2.0 and the Priam DataTower described in this issue's lead story for the 3.0 results. We made some interesting discoveries. First of all, it's surprisingly difficult to get exactly the same timing twice. It isn't easy depressing a stopwatch button and the Lisa power button at exactly the same moment. We feel the accuracy of those tenths digits is very questionable. Also, Lisa benchmark tests need to be specified to a finer level of detail than described in these tables. For example, are Opens and Closes done from the pull-down menu or by double clicking? Is the memory test brief or thorough? Do we go to the Environments Window immediately after powering up? The speed of many Lisa operations depends on file counts and other leftovers of past activity. For example, powering off or going to the Environments Window is much quicker when done immediately after powering on, as opposed to after doing lots of file manipulation. Notice the amazing differences between our 2/5 2.0 results and your 2/10 2.0 results: the discrepancy is far larger than either result compared to 7/7. More tests, tightly defined and controlled, definitely need to be done to explain what's really going on. In any case, we're not really bothered by slow 3.0 operations, because we're willing to trade them off for the extra capabilities. (We realize your existing investment in 2.0 files makes it tough to convert.) Sure, opening Preferences may take more than twice as long now, but Preferences is also a larger and more complicated program now, and we don't open it that often, anyway. Sure, opening a LisaDrawing may be 15% slower now, but that's only an extra ten seconds, which might easily be recovered the first time we use Reduce To Fit and move an object from one end of the document to the other, in a single step that the old LisaDraw can't match. Sure, LisaWrite might be slower now, but who wants to look up words in the dictionary? Similar arguments hold for the new Desk menu, for being able to queue multiple documents for printing, for having more text sizes, for being able to rotate drawings, and so on. Although a single given operation might be slower under 3.0, in the long run we expect to save time and be much more productive. -MG

Perhaps 7/7 Isn't A Whole

I read with interest your discussion of Lisa 7/7 software in *Signal #14*. I agree that 7/7 represents a major step forward. Apple has done an excellent job of improving 2.0 and of adding some nice new features.

I agree with you that the new manuals are nicer than the old ones, even though I like the originals for their consistency and graphics and lack of errors. There are a few typos and omissions in the new books.

Your suggested approach of having printer icons into which we could just deposit document icons is excellent. It would seem to be a natural for the desktop analogy. I wonder why Apple elected not to do it that way?

A new addition to LisaWrite helps save time: the software is aware of documents that have not been modified after having been opened. It can then put them away quickly when asked to do a save.

LisaDraw was already, for me, about the best of the applications in many ways. The new improvements make it even better. I wish LisaWrite could be as fast as LisaDraw. The Reduce To Fit function was essential for LisaGraph and is now proving to be very productive in LisaDraw. Something similar would be valuable in LisaWrite.

I really like 7/7 but it does have several nagging problems. Let me give you some examples, but please keep in mind that overall I find my Lisa productive and useful and fun.

1. The LisaWrite spelling program is good in many ways. It is amazingly fast, it has well-designed functional versatility, and it often finds the right spelling for unusual errors like "neemonic" or "rath". But there are some misspelled words it has a hard time with, like "reath" and "bisness". There are also lots of words not included in the dictionary. Some that I have added so far include: pixel, desktop, debounce, bulletproof, alphanumeric, makeup, outperform, outperformed, decodable, undecodable, incrementally, recalibrate,

hereunder, reload, reloading, abstemious, impecunious, incalescent, backup, electromechanical, absterge, decompress, swapable, xylograph, plenum, technologies, metastable, fictile, fanfold, misspelled (!). This tells me that I can look forward to inserting a lot of words on my own. I think users will need to keep documents containing their own personal dictionaries, for backup reasons as well as for swapping in and out of the dictionary when necessary. By the way, the speller only puts a word in the personal dictionary once. If the user happens to enter the same word again, it is ignored.

2. The documentation says that the Attributes selection in the File/Print menu indicates page counts, but the software in fact does not do so. This becomes a more than trivial issue because Apple has eliminated page counts from the printer dialog boxes. It appears that for documents without page numbering, the only way to know the page count of a document that has just been reformatted, for example, is to Insert Page Number, scroll to the end, check the page count, and then eliminate the page number. Attributes is a great addition, but it only works on folders, disks and closed documents. It is not available for an open document. I would think that would be one place where Attributes would be nice. Why

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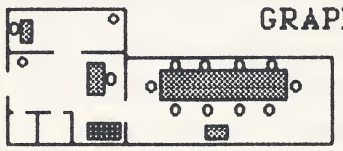

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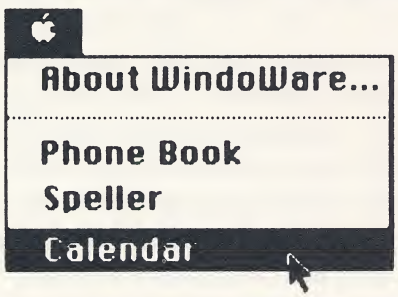

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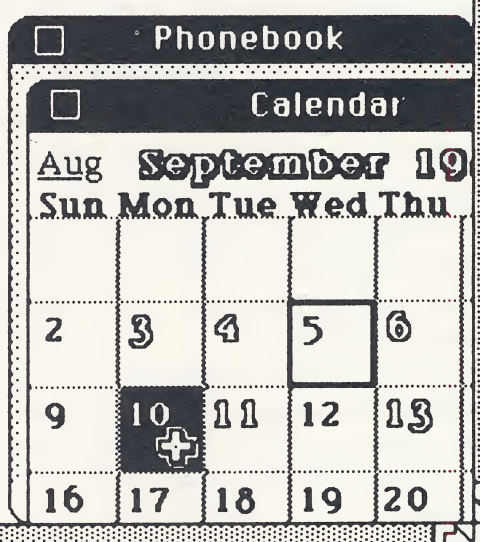

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would Apple leave it out?

3. The changes-only backup does not seem to work. I suggest that users keep their own documents-only backup in addition to the full backup that Lisa performs.

4. LisaList, LisaDraw and LisaCalc all now cause the printer, with fanfold paper, to emit an empty page before beginning to print a document! (LisaDraw only does this on some documents.) One way around this problem is to select the Single Sheet option in the Print dialog box. This causes some awkward extra dialog boxes to appear during printing, but it does save paper. For long documents it will usually be better to just accept the extra blank paper as calmly as possible.

5. The new ability of 7/7 to queue multiple printing jobs is good, though overdue. But in the Monitor the Printer dialog box there is no way to abort the active print job without also dumping all printing tasks that may be pending. Instead of one dialog button to kill printing, it would have been nice if Apple had put in four buttons: (a) delete the current job only, (b) delete all jobs pending, (c) pause printing, and (d) resume printing.

6. When the Lisa hard disk is shared with Macintosh programs, it really does act like a separate disk. Even when completely erasing the Lisa disk, the Macintosh portion is not touched. On the other hand, it takes a power-down plus the insertion of two boot disks during a power-up to get to the Macintosh documents on the hard disk. MacWorks should be an option in the Environments Window or an icon on the desktop.

7. I can't paste from LisaWrite into LisaList in the way the manual indicates. Something seems wrong about the way LisaList treats Return characters.

8. I suggest that users not try to use the diskette duplicating routine. It does not work, at least with some disks. Just duplicate the documents instead.

It will be interesting to see how Apple resolves these issues. None of these items should deter a typical user from upgrading to 7/7. I think the advantages far outweigh the problems.

Joe Kroeger, Sunnyvale, CA

The more we think about printer icons, the more we realize how tricky such an operator interface can be. (It's easy to come up with a one-sentence idea, only to find that working out all the details becomes an enormous job.) Perhaps Apple ran into some of the same design problems that have since occurred to us. For example, would you require the user to make a duplicate of a document before moving it to the printer icon? After all, shouldn't a printer icon irreversibly swallow a document, kind of like a black hole folder? Or would the printer icon spit the document icon back out onto the desktop so the user isn't required to make a duplicate? In either case, the techniques are completely different from any current desktop operation. Also notice how a printer icon would have to correctly interpret and print any type of document, even if the document's application window is not open. (It's interesting to see how the Macintosh is different from the Lisa in these types of operations. On the Mac, moving a document to a non-folder icon implies making a copy, not moving the original. The Macintosh Finder is also capable of letting any selection of documents invoke their application windows and start to print, right from the desktop.) Your observation about LisaWrite quickly closing files reminds us of a test we made during our original visit to Apple to see 7/7: we opened and then immediately closed a LisaDrawing without making any changes, only to find that the document still had its modification date and time udpated. That's too bad, because it means that any document inspected or printed gets tagged for the next incremental disk backup, even if its contents didn't really change. (A way to avoid this is to make a duplicate, inspect or print it instead of the original, and then trash the duplicate.) To us, LisaWrite's speed already seems fairly comparable to LisaDraw's, assuming a typical LisaWrite document probably has to handle many more bytes of data than in an average LisaDrawing. At least LisaWrite 3.0 seems definitely faster than the 2.0 version. As for spelling error correction, that's much harder than spelling error detection, so we aren't too disappointed when LisaWrite isn't always able

to make a correct guess. You obviously have an extensive "professional" vocabulary. Looks like a chemist or lawyer or just about any professional is going to find a lot of missing words. Perhaps there'll be a market for LisaWrite dictionary extensions for medicine, physics, architecture, and so on. Notice how the Attributes selection is like Get Info on the Macintosh? Macintosh doesn't provide Get Info on an open document, either. As for counting pages, 3.0 might be awkward, but remember that 2.0 really didn't indicate page counts until after a document was sent to the printer. Wouldn't it be nice if you could just select jobs for deletion from the print queue with the mouse? And we really like your idea of making MacWorks an icon or at least an Environments Window entry. Keep those wishes coming. -MG

Is Anyone MacWorking?

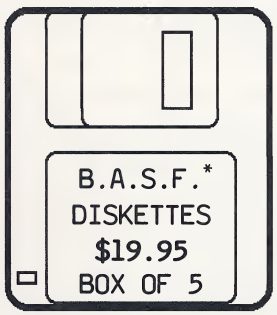
I thought I would drop you a line along with the application for my free subscription renewal. (That seems a bit odd, a free renewal.) I find myself looking forward each month to receiving *Signal*. I'm especially interested in information on the Lisa running MacWorks. It seems to be an area which is not frequently commented on.

Russell Pringle, San Diego, CA

We usually get four or five address corrections a day, and most of them from the Post Office, not our readers. Although we're free, requiring subscribers to periodically renew is the only foolproof way we can be sure a given address is still worth mailing to. Now that MacWorks will support Lisa disks, and now that more Macintosh software is out, we'll probably see more MacWorks users. Until fairly recently, there wasn't a whole lot the Macintosh could do that the Lisa couldn't duplicate with its own software. We're also fortunate enough to have both machines here at the office, so we probably tend to ignore MacWorks since we already have the best of both worlds. -MG

What's New With Microsoft BASIC 1.01

Microsoft Corporation has released a revised Macintosh BASIC interpreter. The



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new master disk contains a dumb-terminal program that makes good use of the graphics calls available within BASIC. The mouse is used to select the baud rate, data bits and other parameters from a menu. The program does not allow you to upload or download files. It does allow transmission at up to 9600 baud.

Documentation supplied with the disk consists of a set of pages stapled together and includes a page describing enhancements, a page describing corrections to existing problems, three pages of answers to commonly asked questions, three pages of corrections to earlier documentation errata (mainly typographical errors), thirteen pages on the Toolbox reprinted from an article in *Macworld,* and five pages of short programs by Microsoft to illustrate how to use the graphics functions and file procedures.

Problems that have been corrected include: SAVEing to and LOADing from another disk, keeping files in their folders after opening, and SAVE not saving all of a program if another selection was made from the pull-down menu before SAVE was finished. The corrections seem to work properly. Files stay within folders as they should, creation dates don't change with modification dates, and LIST and RUN will not be appended to the end of a program line anymore.

The correction to the LLIST and LPRINT problem of print buffer overflow is listed under "enhancements", as is a correction to make circles look like circles and not ovals on a Lisa under MacWorks. Has Microsoft grown so large they don't have to admit they made mistakes? They even have the terminal program listed under "enhancements". The only real enhancements are an ability to move files between MacWrite and BASIC and a speeding up of the SQR function.

Anyone who sends their master disk to Microsoft will receive the new version free of charge. They say to expect two to three weeks for processing, but don't be surprised at four weeks or more. If you haven't yet received a return authorization number from Microsoft, contact them at Kamber Business Park, 13221 S.E. 26th St., Bellevue, WA 98005.

Norman Thorsen, Poulsbo, WA

We've heard rumors that the future 2.0 version of Microsoft BASIC for the Macintosh (now at beta sites) is a major improvement, and that it will allow much better access to various Mac-style features like pull-down menus, windows, scrolling, and so on. -MG

Circle Constructors Wanted

In using LisaDraw as a poor man's CAD system, I have found that it is seemingly impossible to draw isometric circles (ellipses tilted with respect to vertical). I have only been able to construct them freehand, and attempts to "smooth" them are usually unsuccessful. Have I missed the boat or is there another way?

Bob Ziller, Brea, CA

In some cases, we seem to be able to get reasonable approximations by simply drawing an oval and then squeezing one or both side handles with Auto-Grid off. But if your requirement is essentially for ellipses with axes that are not on the horizontal and vertical, then you're right, it's tough. The best we've been able to do in that case is try to approximate the curve with a series of arcs, but the results leave much to be desired. Arbitrary rotation of LisaDraw objects would be a nice solution. -MG

Apple's Experts Notice Our Typography

I ran across *Signal* at Apple and was pleased to see you were utilizing the Lisa software so well for typesetting, though I did wonder why you were not using the latest release of the Office System. Then I took a closer look and realized the output was off a Compugraphic typesetter, and that only runs on 2.0 software. Ah, well! I do hope that Compugraphic will upgrade soon. The typefaces on 3.0 are much nicer and would be useful to you in your publication. You may ask how I know this, and you may think I am beating my own drum to say it, but the truth is I was the major designer of the Lisa typefaces and icons. The typefaces were all redesigned for the latest 3.0 release of the software. The point system is now used in the menus, a fourteen point size was added, Modern looks more like a sans serif font we

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all love, and the spacing of all the fonts is improved tremendously.

Annette Wagner, Sunnyvale, CA

We mentioned some of those new features in our 7/7 review in issue #14. We've heard that Compugraphic plans to eventually support a huge family of typefaces under 7/7. -MG

Congratulations for your good use of Lisa typesetting. By the way, I wrote the Imagewriter code, and I have brought the Lisa fonts onto the Mac and find them of slightly higher quality than Mac's fonts for high resolution printing. I use the Lisa fonts developed for the Canon color printer for the low point sizes (9, 10, 12) and the Lisa high resolution Imagewriter fonts for the higher sizes (18, 20, 24). The 20 point size is not available for low resolution and will not appear on the point size menu, however it can be used for 10 point high resolution.

Owen Densmore, Cupertino, CA

Is there any chance of convincing Apple to release those Lisa fonts to users in the form of Macintosh Font Mover files? -MG

This Time LisaWrite Fooled Us

On page 6 of *Signal #11*, you wrote that the Workshop conversion trick mentioned in *Signal #3* no longer seems to fool LisaWrite.

I can't figure out why you said that, as it still works fine on my machine.

Bill Starbuck, Milwaukee, WI

Your letter made us decide to give it one more try. You're right, it still works! We changed the name of a Workshop text file to {D999T1}, repaired the disk, and LisaWrite could then open it. We could have sworn it failed to work when we first tried it with 2.0, but somehow we must have goofed. Let's see now, will 3.0 work? -MG

Templates Wanted

Do you know of anyone who has a product similar to the old VisiCalc Real Estate Templates for Lisa?

Les Herman, Charleston, SC

More Notes On Tecmar's Mac Drive

Our previous issue reported a problem with "insufficient memory" when we tried to move fonts into the System file while using Tecmar's hard disk for the Macintosh.

Since then, we received a call from Thomas Wooded, a dealer in Rockledge, Florida. He had run into the same problem but discovered he could get the Font Mover to work by making sure the window for the Tecmar disk included only the Font Mover icon and a single folder (into which all other files and folders were placed).

Unfortunately, this trick doesn't seem to work on our machine. The Font Mover happily removes fonts from the System file, but try as we might, we still can't move any fonts back in. Has anyone else discovered a fix?

We also received a call from Sam Miller, the Tecmar engineer who designed Mac Drive's hardware, responding to our concern about having to rely on Tecmar for modified files. Sam let us know that only the System file itself has been modified for supporting their disk. The Finder file is identical to the one distributed by Apple.

Mouse Stampede Gets A Thumbs Up

Mark of the Unicorn (222 3rd St., Cambridge, MA 02142) has sent us their Mouse Stampede game for the Macintosh. A cover letter indicated $39.95 is the suggested retail priee.

The packaging is the slickest we've seen yet for a Macintosh product, and looks very much like a record album. The vendor gets points for providing an actual photo of the game on the back cover of the package, so customers can see exactly what they're buying. The

single disk that's provided is copy protected.

Mouse Stampede is a shoot-em-up with a theme very similar to the well known Centipede arcade game. It's fast paced, with a lot of action and plenty of targets: rampaging mice, wandering turtles, falling shopping carts, flying bats, stomping sneakers, buzzing flies, slashing knives, wandering paint brushes, sleeping cats and three kinds of cheese. The graphics are great, and the game has lots of music and distracting sound effects just loud enough to be able to drive parents crazy. A scoreboard keeps track of the top ten exterminators. One or two players are allowed, and there's also an automatic demo mode that makes the game an interesting attraction for store displays.

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Each back issue is $1 prepaid in North America, $2 elsewhere.

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Signal #14, July 1984: Exploring Lisa's New Office System • Stanford Making Mac Development Tools • The Latest On Three Mac User Groups • This Month's Mailbag • 16 pages.

Signal #15, August 1984: User Groups: Great Source of Software • Hardware Received: Tecmar's Mac Drive • ClickArt Fails To Impress Us • Mac-Jack Earns A Thumbs Up • Subscriber Interests And Activities • The Secret Lisa Service Mode • This Month's Mailbag • Habadex Back Again • 16 pages.

Issues #1 through #12 are 7 x 9 inches. Issues #3 through #5 and #7 through #12 are not typeset. Mac coverage began with issue #9.

We noticed a few things we would like to change. A dialog box allows the sound to be turned off, but a volume control would have been much better, since the sound effects are half the game's appeal. Instead of smoothly gliding across the screen (like the player's icon), all of the targets move in discrete little jumps, which seems crude and a bit frustrating when you're trying to line up a shot. Occasionally, the screen is so crowded with action (especially when lots of cats are awake) that we notice the machine bogs down slightly. And one confusing feature is the option to pick a starting score. What's the point of that?

Despite these deficiencies, Mouse Stampede is the best action game for the Macintosh that we've seen so far. Our main requirement for game software is that the program should be fun to play. Mouse Stampede clearly meets that criterion, and we definitely give it our Thumbs Up recommendation. ⊟

Subscriber Interests And Activities

Here are more excerpts from the subscription requests we receive from new readers. Subscribers keep telling us that they enjoy finding out what other readers are doing with their machines, so let's see if we can make this column a regular feature in *Signal*.

Rich Powers, Federal Way, WA: I am currently editor of a new newsletter for the Seattle Robotics Society here in the Puget Sound. Of course I am using the mighty Mac to format it.

William J. McCarty, El Toro, CA: I own a Lisa, and use it as a personal work station in my position as Manager of Research and Development at a company in Garden Grove. I find application for all of the Office System tools. LisaTerminal has been especially useful for me by allowing convenient exchange of data between two in-house computers (a PDP/11 and a Harris 700), and to communicate with various corporate mainframes located throughout the country. I also apply LisaPascal extensively for engineering and scientific calculations.

P. Lau, University of Western Australia: We are developing structural engineering software on Lisa.

Mark S. Provinsal, West Germany: My family is part of the military community stationed overseas and I am very much cut off from the computer world in the United States. I write software for European companies and have been a computer enthusiast since 1979. I have recently purchased a Macintosh and am trying to develop software but I have no technical support at all. I am still very much in the dark as to user ROM routines. I would like to contact other Mac users and hopefully even exchange ideas. *[Write to the Nuernberg American High School, APO NY 09696.]* ⊟

Received, But Not Yet Reviewed

New products seem to be arriving here every day. Our plan is to eventually review each and every one in *Signal*. Until that happens, and to help you identify what software products really exist (as opposed to the infamous only-in-a-press-release "vaporware"), here's a list of some recent arrivals:

Klondike solitaire for the Macintosh, from Computing Capabilities Corp., 465-A Fairchild Dr. #122, Mountain View, CA 94043.

Softspot, a magazine on disk for the Macintosh, from Softspot Magazine, 1093 Arroyo Dr., Fullerton, CA 92633.

Mac-Poker, five card draw for the Macintosh, from DataPak Software Inc., 14755 Ventura Blvd. #1-774, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403.

MacFonts Volume I, ten Macintosh typefaces

in a total of twenty sizes, from DNA Inc., 9207 McAfee Dr., Houston, TX 77031.

Two More User Groups Check In

Mac-generated newsletters from new user groups continue to arrive. We received a three page newsletter with the curious name of *Mac-Playground News,* announcing meetings designed to help form an "official" Macintosh users group. For more information, write to E. Schattner, 924 Holbrook, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548, or call 904-862-4908.

We have also received the first edition of a two page newsletter from the Los Angeles Macintosh Group (with a MacPaint letterhead built of freeway signs). Acting president is Eric Anderson, who can be reached at 12021 Wilshire Blvd. #405, Los Angeles, CA 90025 or by calling 213-392-5697.

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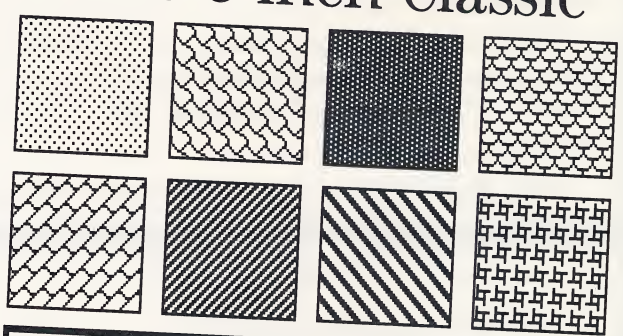

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